

SENATOR NORM COLEMAN'S RX FOR MINNESOTA

There is a revolution underway in the nation's healthcare system. People are living longer, healthier, and higher-quality lives in large part due to the innovations born in Minnesota—home of the Mayo Clinic, the University of Minnesota, and one of the largest concentrations of medical device companies in the world. Thanks to the cutting edge developments and high-quality care found in Minnesota, the state has rightfully earned a reputation as a national healthcare leader.

Upon taking office in 2003, Senator Coleman put passage of a prescription drug benefit for America's seniors at the top of his priority list and worked tirelessly to push the Medicare Part D program through Congress. Today the program is considered to be one of the most important developments in healthcare in recent years – benefiting more than 547,000 Minnesota seniors.

At the same time, Minnesota still faces many challenges. As a remedy, Senator Coleman is pursuing a number of initiatives to ensure that rural communities have access to healthcare and healthcare technologies regardless of their geography, age, or income level. He is also working on reimbursement and payment challenges to ensure that hard working health professionals in Greater Minnesota are being fairly paid for what they do. Likewise, he is concentrating on ways to give citizens more direct control over their healthcare with new ideas like Health Savings Accounts and Small Business Health Plans to expand healthcare coverage and choices.

As a prescription to Minnesota's healthcare ailment, Senator Coleman has put forth the following healthcare legislative agenda:

IMPROVING ACCESS TO RURAL HEALTHCARE

Rural Health Services Preservation Act (S.2819): This legislation will ensure that Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) get reimbursed at a rate that allows them to cover the costs of the important services they offer.

Critical Access to Health Information Technology Act (S.1952): This legislation will help CAHs compete for federal health technology grants.

Remote Monitoring Access Act (S.2022): This legislation will provide Medicare coverage for remote management of specific medical conditions.

Cass County Critical Access Hospital (S.4011): This legislation will enable the City of Walker to build a CAH by exempting it from the federal law requiring it to be a minimum of 35 miles from the nearest hospital.

SUPPORTING NEW HEALTH CARE INNOVATIONS

Health Savings Accounts (HSAs): Senator Coleman supports legislation such as S. 3655 to expand the availability of HSAs, which allow Americans to save, tax-free, for medical expenses.

Association Health Plans (S.406): As a member of the Small Business Committee, Senator Coleman believes small businesses should be able to band together to purchase health insurance for their employees in a more affordable way.

Tax Equity and Affordability Act (S.3754) Original Co Sponsor: This bill allows the self-employed and those lacking employer-based health coverage to realize the same tax benefits for health insurance as companies enjoy.

HELPING KIDS STAY HEALTHY

Conquer Childhood Cancer Act of 2006 (S.2393): The bill would provide funds to raise awareness about childhood cancer and support children and their families who are suffering from this disease. Additionally, the bill would create a biomedical research program and establish a national childhood cancer registry to monitor the incidence of childhood cancers and provide informational and educational services.

Treatment of Children's Deformities Act of 2005 (S.1132): Requires group health insurance coverage that cover surgical benefits to also cover outpatient and inpatient diagnosis and treatment of a child's congenital or developmental deformity, disease, or injury.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF AN AGING POPULATION

Consortium on the Impact of Technology in Aging Health Services (S.3739): The legislation would create a 17-member consortium comprised of health care providers, technology developers, academic institutions, researchers, and government agencies, tasked with fostering innovation, improving quality of life and realizing cost savings through innovative use of technology.

Pharmacist Access and Recognition in Medicare (PHARM) Act (S.2563) Co Sponsor: This legislation will ensure prompt reimbursement of Medicare Part D claims to local pharmacies.

Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit Act (S.1060): This legislation would provide senior citizens and parents of hearing impaired children with a tax credit, once every 5 years, of up to \$500 to the purchase of any hearing aid device.

For more details on Senator Coleman's energy initiatives please visit: www.coleman.senate.gov